

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6138

BILL NUMBER: HB 1207

NOTE PREPARED: Feb 9, 2006

BILL AMENDED: Jan 25, 2006

SUBJECT: Home Improvement Fraud.

FIRST AUTHOR: Rep. Pond

FIRST SPONSOR: Sen. Wyss

BILL STATUS: CR Adopted - 2nd House

FUNDS AFFECTED: X GENERAL
DEDICATED
FEDERAL

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: This bill expands the circumstances in which a home improvement supplier commits home improvement fraud. It makes home improvement fraud a Class D felony or Class C felony in certain cases if: (1) the consumer is at least 60 years of age and the contracted amount exceeds a certain limit; or (2) the home improvement supplier violates two or more provisions of the law.

Effective Date: July 1, 2006.

Explanation of State Expenditures: This bill expands the circumstances in which a home improvement supplier commits fraud. It affects both Class A and B misdemeanors and Class C and D felonies and could result in additional court cases.

Class C & D Felonies: A Class C felony is punishable by a prison term ranging from 2 to 8 years, depending upon mitigating and aggravating circumstances. A Class D felony is punishable by a prison term ranging from six months to three years or reduction to Class A misdemeanor depending upon mitigating and aggravating circumstances.

The average expenditure to house an adult offender was \$21,514 in FY 2004, ranging from a low of \$16,645 to a high of \$49,281. (This does not include the cost of new construction.) If offenders can be housed in existing facilities with no additional staff, the average cost for medical care, food, and clothing is approximately \$1,825 annually, or \$5 daily, per prisoner. The estimated average cost of housing a juvenile in a state juvenile facility was \$59,574, with the costs ranging from a low of \$52,420 to a high of \$77,674.

The average length of stay in Department of Correction (DOC) facilities for all Class C felony offenders is approximately two years and for all Class D felony offenders is approximately ten months.

Explanation of State Revenues: *Class C & D Felonies:* If additional court cases occur and fines are collected, revenue to both the Common School Fund and the state General Fund would increase. The maximum fine for a Class C or Class D felony is \$10,000. Criminal fines are deposited in the Common School Fund.

Class A & B Misdemeanors: If additional court cases occur and fines are collected, revenue to both the Common School Fund and the state General Fund would increase. The maximum fine for a Class A misdemeanor is \$5,000 and \$1,000 for a Class B misdemeanor. Criminal fines are deposited in the Common School Fund.

If the case is filed in a circuit, superior, or county court, 70% of the \$120 court fee that is assessed and collected when a guilty verdict is entered would be deposited in the state General Fund. If the case is filed in a city or town court, 55% of the fee would be deposited in the state General Fund.

Explanation of Local Expenditures: *Penalty Provision:* If more defendants are detained in county jails prior to their court hearings, local expenditures for jail operations may increase. A Class A misdemeanor is punishable by up to one year in jail and 180 days for a Class B misdemeanor. The average daily cost to incarcerate a prisoner in a county jail is approximately \$44.

Explanation of Local Revenues: *Penalty Provision:* If additional court actions occur and a guilty verdict is entered, local governments would receive revenue from the following sources: (1) The county general fund would receive 27% of the \$120 court fee that is assessed in a court of record. Cities and towns maintaining a law enforcement agency that prosecutes at least 50% of its ordinance violations in a court of record may receive 3% of court fees. (2) A \$3 fee would be assessed and, if collected, would be deposited into the county law enforcement continuing education fund. (3) A \$2 jury fee is assessed and, if collected, would be deposited into the county user fee fund to supplement the compensation of jury members.

State Agencies Affected: Department of Correction.

Local Agencies Affected: Trial courts, local law enforcement agencies.

Information Sources: Indiana Sheriffs' Association, Department of Correction.

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